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GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AS A FACTOR IN HISTORY.*

BY

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The location of a country or people is always the supreme geographical fact in its history. It outweighs every other single geographic force. All that has been said of Russia's vast area, of her steppes and tundra wastes, of her impotent seaboard on land-locked basins or ice-bound coasts, of her poverty of mountains and wealth of rivers, fades into the background before her location on the border of Asia. From her defeat by the Tartar hordes in 1224 to her attack upon the Mongolian rulers of the Bosphorus in 1877, and her recent struggle with Japan, most of her wars have been waged against Asiatics. Location made her the bulwark of Central Europe against Asiatic invasion and the apostle of Western civilization to the heart of Asia. If this position on the outskirts of Europe, remote from its great centres of development, has made Russia only partially accessible to European culture and, furthermore, has subjected her to the retarding ethnic and social influences emanating from her Asiatic neighbours, and if the rough tasks imposed by her frontier situation have hampered her progress, these are all the limitations of her geographical location, limitations which not even the advantage of her vast area has been able to outweigh.

Area itself, important as it is, must yield to location. Location may mean only a single spot, and yet from this spot powerful influences may radiate. No one thinks of size when mention is made of Rome or Athens, of Jerusalem or Mecca, of Gibraltar or Port Arthur. Iceland and Greenland guided early Norse ships to the

* Read before the American Historical Association at Madison, Wisconsin, December 28, 1907. From a book in preparation on the Influences of Geographic Environment, based on Ratzel's system of anthropo-geography.

continent of America, as the Canaries and Antilles did those of Spain; but the location of the smaller islands in subtropical latitudes and in the course of the northeast trade-winds made them determine the first permanent path across the Western seas.

The historical significance of many small peoples, and the historical insignificance of many big ones even to the *nil* point, is merely the expression of the preponderant importance of location over area. The Phœnicians, from their narrow strip of coast at the foot of Mount Lebanon, were disseminators of culture over the whole Mediterranean. Holland owed her commercial and maritime supremacy, from the thirteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century, to her exceptional position at the mouth of the great Rhine highway and at the southern angle of the North Sea near the entrance to the unexploited regions of the Baltic. The Iroquois tribes, located where the Mohawk Valley opened a way through the Appalachian barrier between the Hudson River and Lake Ontario, occupied both in the French wars and in the Revolution a strategic position which gave them a power and importance out of all proportion to their numbers.

Location often assumes a fictitious political value, due to a combination of political interests. The Turkish power owes its survival on the soil of Europe to-day wholly to its position on the Bosphorus. Holland owes the integrity of her kingdom, and Roumania that of hers, to their respective locations at the mouths of the Rhine and the Danube, because the interest of western Europe demanded that these two important arteries of commerce should be held by powers too weak ever to tie them up. The same principle has guaranteed the neutrality of Switzerland, whose position puts it in control of all the passes of the Central Alps from Savoy to the Tyrol; and, more recently, that of the young state of Panama, through which the Isthmian Canal is to pass.

Geographical location necessarily includes the idea of the size and form of a country. Even the most general statement of the zonal and interoceanic situation of Canada, the United States, Mexico, and the Russian Empire, indicates the area and contour of their territories. This is still more conspicuously the case with naturally defined regions, such as island and peninsula countries. But location includes a complex of yet larger and more potent relations which go with mere attachment to this or that continent, or to one or another side of a continent. Every part of the world gives to its lands and its peoples some of its own qualities; and so

again every part of this part. Arabia, India and Farther India, spurs of the Asiatic land-mass, have had and will always have a radically different ethnic and political history from Greece, Italy and Spain, the corresponding peninsulas of Europe, because the histories of these two groups are bound up in their respective continents. The idea of a European state has a different content from that of an Asiatic, or North American or African state; it includes a different race or combination of races, different social and economic development, different political ideals. Location, therefore, means climate and plant life at one end of the scale, civilization and political status at the other.

This larger conception of location brings a correspondingly larger conception of environment, which affords the solution of many otherwise hopeless problems of anthropo-geography. It is embodied in the law that the influences of a land upon its people spring not only from the physical features of the land itself, but also from a wide circle of lands into which it has been grouped by virtue of its location. Almost every geographical interpretation of the ancient and modern history of Greece has been inadequate, because it has failed sufficiently to emphasize the most essential factor in this history, namely, Greece's location at the threshold of the Orient. This location has given to Greek history a strong Asiatic colour. It comes out in the accessibility of Greece to ancient Oriental civilization and commerce, and is conspicuous in every period from the Argonautic Expedition to the achievement of independence in 1832 and the recent efforts for the liberation of Crete. This outpost location before the Mediterranean portals of the vast and arid plains of southwestern Asia, exposed to every tide of migration or conquest sent out by those hungry lands, had in it always an element of weakness. In comparison with the shadow of Asia, which constantly overhung the Greek people and from 1401 to 1823 enveloped them, only secondary importance can be attributed to their advantageous local conditions as factors in Greek history.

It is a similar intercontinental location in the isthmian region between the Mediterranean on the west and the ancient maritime routes of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf on the east, which gave to Phœnicia the office of middleman between the Orient and Occident, and predestined its conquest, now by the various Asiatic powers of Mesopotamia, now by the Pharaohs of Egypt, now by European Greeks and Romans, now by a succession of Asiatic peoples, till to-day we find it incorporated in the Asiatic-European Empire of

Turkey. Proximity to Africa has closely allied Spain to the southern continent in flora, fauna, and ethnic stock. The long-headed, brunette Mediterranean race occupies the Iberian Peninsula and the Berber territory of northwest Africa.* This unity of race is also reflected in the political union of the two districts for long periods, first under the Carthaginians, then the Romans, who secured Hispania by a victory on African soil, and finally by the Saracens. This same African note in Spanish history recurs to-day in Spain's interest in Morocco and the influence in Moroccan affairs yielded her by France and Germany at the Algeciras convention in 1905.

In distinction to this continental or intercontinental location, anthropo-geography recognizes two other narrower meanings of the term. The innate mobility of the human race, due primarily to the eternal food quest and increase of numbers, leads a people to spread out over a territory till they reach the barriers which nature has set up, or meet the frontiers of other tribes and nations. Their habitat or their specific geographic location is thus defined by natural features of mountain, desert and sea, or by the neighbours whom they are unable to displace, or more often by both.

A people has, therefore, a twofold location, an immediate one, based upon their actual territory, and a mediate or vicinal one, growing out of its relations to the peoples nearest them. The first is a question of the soil under their feet; the other, of the neighbours about them. The first or natural location embodies the complex of local geographic conditions which furnish the basis for their tribal or national existence. This basis may be a peninsula, island, archipelago, an oasis, an arid steppe, a mountain system, or a fertile lowland. The stronger the vicinal location, the more dependent is the people on the neighbouring states, but the more potent the influence which it can, under certain circumstances, exert upon them. Witness Germany in relation to Holland, France, Austria and Poland. The stronger the natural location, on the other hand, the more independent is the people and the more strongly marked is the national character. This is exemplified in the people of mountain lands like Switzerland, Abyssinia and Nepal; of peninsulas like Korea, Spain and Scandinavia; and of islands like England and Japan. To-day we stand amazed at that strong primordial brand of the Japanese character which nothing can blur or erase.

Clearly defined natural locations, in which barriers of moun-

* W. L. Ripley, *The Races of Europe*, pp. 272-273. New York, 1899.

tains and sea draw the boundaries and guarantee some degree of isolation, tend to hold their people in a calm embrace, to guard them against outside interference and infusion of foreign blood, and thus to make them develop the national genius in such direction as the local geographic conditions permit. In the unceasing movements which have made up most of the historic and prehistoric life of the human race, in their migrations and counter-migrations, their incursions, retreats, and expansions over the face of the earth, vast unfenced areas, like the open lowlands of Russia and the grasslands of Africa, present the picture of a great thoroughfare swept by pressing throngs. Other regions, more secluded, appear as quiet nooks, made for a temporary halt or a permanent rest. Here some part of the passing human tide is caught as in a vessel and held till it crystallizes into a nation. These are the conspicuous areas of race characterization. The development of the various ethnic and political offsprings of the Roman Empire in the naturally defined areas of Italy, the Iberian Peninsula, and France illustrates the process of national differentiation which goes on in such secluded locations.

A marked influence in this development is generally ascribed to the protection afforded by such segregated districts. But protection alone is only a negative force in the life of a people; it leaves them free to develop in their own way, but does not say what that way shall be. On the other hand, the fact that such a district embraces a certain number of geographic features, and encompasses them by obstructive boundaries, is of immense historical importance; because this restriction leads to the concentration of the national powers, to the more thorough utilization of natural advantages, both racial and geographical, and thereby to the growth of an historical individuality. Nothing robs the historical process of so much of its greatness or weakens so much its effects as its dispersion over a wide, boundless area. This was the disintegrating force which sapped the strength of the French colonies in America. The endless valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi and the alluring fur trade tempted them to an expansion that was their political and economic undoing. Russia's history illustrates the curse of a distant horizon. On the other hand, out of a restricted geographical base, with its power to concentrate and intensify the national forces, grew Rome and Greece, England and Japan, ancient Peru and the Thirteen Colonies of America.

If even the most detached and isolated of these natural locations

be examined, its people will, nevertheless, reveal a transitional character, intermediate between those of its neighbours, because from these it has borrowed both ethnic stock and culture. Great Britain is an island, but its vicinal location groups it with the North Sea family of peoples. Even in historic times it has derived ancient Belgian stock, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Danish and Scandinavian from the long semi-circle of nearby continental lands, which have likewise contributed so much to the civilization of the island. Similarly, Japan traces the sources of its population to the north of Asia by way of the island of Sakhalin, to the west through Korea, and to the Malay district of the south, whence the Kuro Siwa has swept stragglers to the shores of Kiu-siu. Like England, Japan also has drawn its civilization from its neighbours, and then, under the isolating influence of its local environment, has individualized both race and culture. Here we have the interplay of the forces of natural and vicinal location.

A people situated between two other peoples forms an ethnic and cultural link between the two. The transitional type is as familiar in anthropo-geography as in biology. The only exception is found in the young intrusion of a migrating or conquering people, like that of the Hungarians and Turks in southeastern Europe, and of the Berber Touaregs and Foulbes among the negroes of western Soudan; or of a colonizing people, like that of the Russians in Mongolian Siberia and of Europeans among the aborigines of South Africa. Even in these instances race amalgamation tends to take place along the frontiers, as was the case in Latin America and as occurs to-day in Alaska and northern Canada, where the "squaw man" is no rarity. The assimilation of culture, at least in a superficial sense, may be yet more rapid, especially where hard climatic conditions force the interloper to imitate the life of the native. The industrial and commercial Hollander, when transplanted to the dry grasslands of South Africa, became pastoral like the native Kaffirs. The French voyageur of Canada could scarcely be distinguished from the Indian trapper; occupation, food, dress, and spouse were the same. Only a lighter tint of skin distinguished the half-breed children of the Frenchman. The settlers of the early trans-Allegheny commonwealths, at least for a generation or two, showed little outward difference in mode of life from that of the savage community among which they dwelt.*

The more alike the components of such a vicinal group of people,

* Monette, *History of the Valley of the Mississippi*, Vol. II, Chap. I, 1846.

the easier, freer and more effective will be the mediating function of the central one. Germany has demonstrated this in her long history as intermediary between the nations of southeastern and western Europe. The kingdom of Poland, occupying a portion of the Baltic slope of northern Europe, fended by no natural barriers from its eastern and western neighbours, long constituted a transition form between the two. Though affiliated with Russia in point of language, the Poles are Occidental in their religion; and their head-form resembles that of northern Germany rather than that of Russia.* The country belongs to western Europe in the density of its population (74 to the square kilometre or 190 to the square mile), which is quadruple that of remaining European Russia, and also in its industrial and social development. The partition of Poland among the three neighbouring powers was the final expression of its intermediate location and character. One part was joined politically to the Slav-German western border of Russia, and another, to the German-Slav border of Germany, while the portion that fell to the Austrian Empire simply extended the northern Slav area of that country found in Bohemia and Moravia.

If the intermediate people greatly differs in race or civilization from both neighbours, it exercises and receives slight influence. The Mongols of Central Asia, between China on one side and Persia and India on the other, have been poor vehicles for the exchange of culture between these two great districts. The Hungarians, located between the Roumanians and Germans on the east and west, Slovaks and Croatians on the north and south, have helped little to reconcile race differences in the great empire of the Danube.

The unifying effect of vicinal location is greatly enhanced if the neighbouring people are grouped about an enclosed sea which affords an easy highway for communication. The integrating force of such a basin will often overcome the disintegrating force of race antagonisms. The Roman Empire in the Mediterranean was able to evolve an effective centralized government and to spread one culture over the neighbouring shores, despite great variety of nationality and language and every degree of cultural development. A certain similarity of natural conditions, climatic and otherwise, from the Iberian peninsula to the borders of the Syrian desert, also aided in the process of amalgamation.

Where similarity of race already forms a basis for congeniality, such circumthalassic groups display the highest degree of interactive

* W. L. Ripley, *Races of Europe*, p. 336, map p. 53. New York, 1899.

influence. These contribute to a further blending of population and unification of culture, by which the whole circle of the enclosing lands tends to approach one standard of civilization. This was the history of the Baltic coast from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, when the German Hansa distributed the material products of Europe's highest civilization from Russian Novgorod to Norway. The North Sea group, first under the leadership of Holland, later under England's guidance, became a single community of advancing culture, which was a later reflection of the early community of race stretching from the Faroe and Shetland Islands to the Rhine and the Elbe. This same process has been going on for ages about the marginal basins of eastern Asia, the Yellow and Japan Seas. Community of race and culture stamps China, Korea and Japan. A general advance in civilization under the leadership of Japan, the England of the East, now inaugurates the elevation of the whole group.

An even closer connection exists between adjoining nations who are united by ties of blood and are further made economically dependent upon one another, because of a contrast in the physical conditions and, therefore, in the products of their respective territories. Numerous coast and inland tribes, pastoral and agricultural tribes are united because they are mutually necessary. In British Columbia and Alaska the fishing Indians of the seaboard long held a definite commercial relation to the hunting tribes of the interior, selling them the products and wares of the coast, while monopolizing their market for the inland furs. Such was the position of the Ugalentz tribe of Tlingits near the mouth of the Copper River in relation to the up-stream Athapascans; of the Kinik tribe at the head of Cook's Inlet in relation to the inland Atnas;* of the Chilcats of Chilkoot Inlet to the mountain Tinnehs. Similarly, the hunting folk of the Kalahari Desert in South Africa attach themselves to influential tribesmen of the adjacent Bechuana grasslands, in order to exchange the skins of the desert animals for spears, knives, and tobacco†. Fertile agricultural lands adjoining pastoral regions of deserts and steppes have in all times drawn to their border markets the mounted plainsmen, bringing the products of their herds to exchange for grain; and in all times the abundance of their green fields has lured their ill-fed neighbours to conquest, so that the economic bond becomes only a preliminary to a political

* Eleventh Census Report for Alaska, pp. 66, 67, 70. Washington, 1893.

† David Livingstone, *Travels in South Africa*, p. 56. New York, 1858.

bond and an ethnic amalgamation growing out of this strong vicinal location. The forest lands of Great Russia supplement the grain-bearing Black Lands of Little Russia; the two are united through geographico-economic conditions, which would not permit an independent existence to the smaller, weaker section of the south, ever open to hostile invasion from Asia.*

Leaving now the ethnic and economic ties which may strengthen the cohesive power of such vicinal grouping, and considering only its purely geographic aspects, we distinguish the following types:

I. Central location. Examples:• The Magyars in the Danube Valley; the Iroquois Indians on the Mohawk River and the Finger Lakes; Russia from the 10th to the 18th century; Poland from 1000 to its final partition in 1795; Bolivia.

II. Peripheral location: The Phœnicians; Greek colonies in Asia Minor and southern Italy; the Roman Empire at the accession of Augustus; the Thirteen Colonies in 1750.

III. Scattered location: English and French settlements in America prior to 1700; Chinese in the Malay Archipelago; Indians in the United States and the Kaffirs in South Africa; Portuguese holdings in the Orient, and French in India.

IV. Location in a related series: Oasis states grouped along desert routes; islands along great marine routes.

All peoples in their geographical distribution tend to follow a social and political law of gravitation, in accordance with which members of the same tribe or race gather around a common centre or occupy a continuous stretch of territory, as compactly as their own economic status and the physical conditions of climate and soil will permit. This is characteristic of all mature and historically significant peoples who have risen to sedentary life, maintained their hold on a given territory, and, with increase of population, have widened their boundaries. The nucleus of such a people may be situated somewhere in the interior of a continent, and with growing strength it may expand in every direction; or it may originate on some advantageous inlet of the sea and spread thence up and down the coast, till the people have possessed themselves of a long-drawn hem of land and used this peripheral location to intercept the trade between their back country and the sea.

These are the two types of continuous location. In contrast to them, a discontinuous or scattered location characterizes the sparse distribution of primitive hunting and pastoral tribes; or the shattered

* Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars*, Vol. I, pp. 36, 108. New York, 1893.

fragments of a conquered people, whose territory has been honey-combed by the land appropriation of the victors; or of a declining, moribund people, who, owing to bad government, poor economic methods, and excessive competition in the struggle for existence, have shrunk to mere patches. As a favorable symptom, a scattered location regularly marks the healthy growth of an expanding people, who throw out here and there detached centres of settlement far beyond the compact frontier and fix these as the goal for the advance of their boundary; and it is also a familiar feature of maritime commercial expansion, which is guided by no territorial ambition but aims to secure merely widely distributed trading stations at favorable coast points, in order to make the circle of commerce as ample and resourceful as possible. But this latter form of scattered location is not permanently sound. Back of it lies the short-sighted policy of the middleman nation, which makes wholly inadequate estimate of the value of land, and is content with an ephemeral prosperity.

A broad territorial base and security of possession are the guarantees of national survival. The geographic conditions which favor one often operate against the other. Peripheral location means a narrow base but a protected frontier along the sea; central location means opportunity for widening the territory, but it also means danger. A state embedded in the heart of a continent has, if strong, every prospect of radial expansion and of the exercise of widespread influence; but if weak, its very existence is imperilled, because it is exposed to encroachments on every side. A central location minus the bulwark of natural boundaries enabled the kingdom of Poland to be devoured piecemeal by its voracious neighbours. The kingdom of Burgundy, always a state of fluctuating boundaries and shifting allegiances, fell at last a victim to its central location, and saw its name obliterated from the map. Hungary, which, in the year 1000, occupied a restricted inland location on the middle Danube, by the 14th century broke through the barriers of its close-hugging neighbours, and stretched its boundaries from the Adriatic to the Euxine; two hundred years later its territory contracted to a fragment before the encroachments of the Turks, but afterwards recovered in part its old dimensions. Germany has, in common with the little Soudanese state of Bornu, an influential and dangerous position. The location of the Central European states between the Baltic and the Balkans has exposed them to all the limitations and dangers arising from a narrow circle of land neighbours. Moreover,

the diversified character of the country, its complex mountain systems, and diverging river courses have acted as disintegrating forces which have prevented the political concentration necessary to repel interference from without. The Muscovite power, which had its beginning in a modest central location about the sources of the Dwina, Dnieper and Volga, was aided by the physical unity of its unobstructed plains, which facilitated political combination. Hence, on every side it burst through its encompassing neighbours and stretched its boundaries to the untenanted frontier of the sea. Central location was the undoing of the Transvaal Republic. Its efforts to expand to the Indian Ocean were blocked by its powerful British neighbour at every point—at Delagoa Bay in 1875 by treaty with Portugal, at Santa Lucia Bay in 1884, and through Swaziland in 1894. The Orange Free State was maimed in the same way when, in 1868, she tried to stretch out an arm through Basutoland to the sea.* Here even weak neighbours were effective to curtail the seaward growth of these inland states, because they were made the tools of one strong, rapacious neighbour. A central position teaches always the lesson of vigilance and preparedness for hostilities, as the Boer equipment in 1899, the military organization of Germany, and the bristling fortresses on the Swiss Alpine passes prove.

How intimate and necessary are the relations between central and peripheral location is shown by the fact that all states strive to combine the two. In countries like Norway, France, Spain, Japan, Korea and Chile, the peripheral location predominates, and therefore confers upon them at once the security and commercial accessibility which result from contact with the sea. Other countries, like Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary, chiefly central in location, have the strategic and even the commercial value of their coasts reduced by the long, tortuous course which connects them with the open ocean. Therefore, we find Russia planning to make a great port at Ekaterina Harbor on the northernmost point of her Lapland coast, where an out-runner from the Gulf Stream ensures an ice-free port on the open sea.† An admirable combination of central and peripheral location is seen in the United States. Here the value of periphery is greatly enhanced by the interoceanic location of the country, and the danger of entanglements arising from a marked central location is reduced by the simplicity of the political neighbourhood. But our country has paid for this security by an historical

* James Bryce, *Impressions of South Africa*, pp. 147, 150, 170-173. New York, 1897.

† Alexander P. Engelhardt, *A Russian Province of the North*, pp. 135, 140-147, 165, 170. Translated from the Russian, London, 1899.

aloofness and poverty of influence. Civilized countries which are wholly central in their location are very few, only nine in all. Six of these are mountain or plateau states, like Switzerland and Abyssinia, which have used the fortress character of their land to resist conquest, and have preferred independence to the commercial advantages to be gained only by affiliation with their peripheral neighbours.

Central and peripheral location presuppose and supplement one another. One people inhabits the interior of an island or continent whose rim is occupied by another. The first suffers from exclusion from the sea and therefore strives to get a strip of coast. The coast people feel the drawback of their narrow hold upon the land, want a broader base in order to exploit fully the advantages of their maritime location, fear the pressure of their hinterland when the great forces there imprisoned shall begin to move; so they tend to expand inland to strengthen themselves and weaken the neighbour in their rear. The English colonies of America, prior to 1763, held a long cordon of coast, hemmed in between the Appalachian Mountains and the sea. Alarmed by threats of French encroachments from the interior, they expanded from this narrow peripheral base into the heart of the continent, and after the Revolution reached the Mississippi River and the northern boundaries of the Spanish Floridas. They now held a central location in relation to the long Spanish periphery on the Gulf of Mexico. True to the instincts of that location, they began to throw the weight of their vast hinterland against the weak coastal barrier. This gave way, either to forcible appropriation of territory or diplomacy or war, till the United States had incorporated in her own territory the peripheral lands of the Gulf from Florida Strait to the Rio Grande.

In Asia this same process has been perennial and on a far greater scale. The big arid core of that continent, containing many million square miles, has been charged with an expansive force. From the appearance of the Aryans in the Indus Valley and the Scythians on the borders of Macedonia, it has sent out hordes to overwhelm the peripheral lands from the Yellow Sea to the Black, and from the Indian Ocean to the White Sea.* To-day Russia is making history there on the pattern set by geographic conditions. From her most southerly province in Trans-Caspia, conquered a short twenty-five years ago, she is heading towards the Indian Ocean. The Anglo-Russian convention of August 31st, 1907, yielding to Russia all

* For full and able discussion, see H. J. Mackinder, *The Geographical Pivot of History*, in the *Geographical Journal*, April, 1904. London.

northern Persia as her sphere of influence, enables her to advance half way to the Persian Gulf, though British statesmen regard it as a check upon her ambition, because England has secured her claim to the littoral. But Russia by this great stride towards her goal is working with causes, satisfied to let the effects follow at their leisure. She has gained the best portion of Persia, comprising the six largest cities and the most important lines of communication radiating from the capital.* This country will make a solid base for her further advance to the Persian Gulf; and, when developed by Russian enterprise in railroad building and commerce, it will make a heavy weight bearing down upon the coast. The ponderous mass which is pressing down on England's Persian littoral reaches from Ispahan and Yezd to the far-away shores of the Arctic Ocean.

In the essentially complementary character of interior and periphery are rooted all these coastward and landward movements of expansion. Where an equilibrium seems to have been reached, the peoples who have accepted either the one or the other one-sided location have generally for the time being ceased to grow. Such a location has therefore a passive character. But the surprising elasticity of many nations may start up an unexpected activity which will upset this equilibrium. Where the central location is that of a small mountain community, like the Romansch people in the Graubünden Alps or the Igorots in the highland interior of Luzon, or the Veddas of central Ceylon, the passive character is plain enough. In the case of larger groups occupying a central location, it is often difficult to say whether progression or retrogression is to be their fate. As a rule, however, the expulsion of a people from a peripheral point of advantage and their confinement in the interior gives the sign of national decay, as did Poland's loss of her Baltic seaboard. Russia's loss of her Manchurian port and the resignation of her ambition on the Chinese coasts is at least a serious check. On the other hand, if a country enclosed by her neighbours succeeds in somewhere making a breach in the fence, the sign is hopeful. The century-old political slogan of Hungary, "To the sea, Magyars!" has borne fruit in the Adriatic harbor of Fiume, which is to-day the pride of the nation and in no small degree a basis for its hope of autonomy. The history of Montenegro took on a new phase when from its mountain seclusion it recently secured the short strip of seaboard which it had won and lost so often. Such peripheral holdings are the lungs through which states breathe.

* The Anglo-Russian Agreement, with map, in *The Independent*, October 10, 1907.

History and the study of race distribution reveal a mass of facts which represent the reaction between interior and periphery. Especially the story of discovery and colonization, from the days of ancient Greek enterprise in the Mediterranean to the recent German expansion along the Gulf of Guinea, shows the appropriation first of the rims of islands and continents, and later that of the interior. A difference of race and culture between inland and peripheral inhabitants meets us almost everywhere in the more retarded lands of the earth. In the Philippines, the wild people of Luzon, Mindoro and the Visayas are confined almost entirely to the interior, while civilized or Christianized Malays occupy the whole seaboard, except where the rugged Sierra Madre Mountains, fronting the Pacific in Luzon, harbor a sparse population of primitive Negritos.* For centuries Arabs held the coast of East Africa, where their narrow zone of settlement bordered on that of native blacks, with whom they traded. Even ancient Greece showed a wide difference in type of character and culture between the inland and maritime states. The Greek landsman was courageous and steadfast, but crude, illiterate, unenterprising, showing sterility of imagination and intellect; while his brother of the seaboard was active, daring, mercurial, imaginative, open to all the influences of a refining civilization.† Today the distribution of the Greeks along the rim of the Balkan peninsula and Asia Minor, in contrast to the Turks and Slavs of the interior, is distinctly a peripheral phenomenon.‡

The rapid inland advance from the coast of oversea colonists is part of that restless activity which is fostered by contact with the sea and supported by that command of abundant resources conferred by maritime superiority. The Anglo-Saxon invasion of England, as later the English colonization of America, seized the rim of the land, and promptly pushed up the rivers in sea-going boats far into the interior. But periphery may give to central region something more than conquerors and colonists. From its active markets and cosmopolitan exchanges there steadily filter into the interior culture and commodities, carried by peaceful merchant and missionary, who, however, are often only the harbingers of the conqueror. The accessibility of the periphery tends to raise it in culture, wealth, density of population, and often in political importance, far in advance of the centre.

The maritime periphery of a country receives a variety of over-

* Census of the Philippine Islands of 1903; Vol. I, p. 526; Vol. II, pp. 50-52 and map. Washington.

† Grote, *History of Greece*, Vol. II, pp. 225-226. New York, 1859.

‡ W. L. Ripley, *The Races of Europe*, pp. 402-410, map. New York, 1899.

sea influences, blends and assimilates these to its own culture, Hellenizes, Americanizes or Japanizes them, as the case may be, and then passes them on into the interior. Here no one foreign influence prevails. On the land boundaries the case is different. Each inland frontier has to reckon with a different neighbour and its undiluted influence. A predominant central location means a succession of such neighbours, on all sides friction which may polish or rub sore. The distinction between a many-sided and a one-sided historical development depends upon the contact of a people with its neighbours. Consider the multiplicity of influences which have flowed in upon Austria from all sides. But not all such influences are similar in kind or in degree. The most powerful neighbour will chiefly determine on which boundary of a country its dominant historical processes are to work themselves out in a given epoch. Therefore, it is of supreme importance to the character of a people's history on which side this most powerful neighbour is located. Russia had for several centuries such a neighbour in the Tartar hordes along its southeastern frontier, and, therefore, its history received an Asiatic stamp; so, too, did that of Austria and Hungary in the long resistance to Turkish invasion. All three states suffered in consequence a retardation of development on their western sides. This appeared later, after the turmoil on the Asiatic frontier had subsided, and the great centres of European culture and commerce beyond the Vistula and the March began to assert their powers of attraction. The young Roman Republic drew up its forces to face the threatening power of Carthage in the south, and thereby was forced into rapid maritime development; the Roman Empire faced north to meet the inroads of the barbarians, and thereby was drawn into inland expansion. All these instances show that a vital historical turning-point is reached in the development of every country when the scene of its great historical happenings shifts from one side to another.

In addition to the aggressive neighbour, there is often a more sustained force that may draw the activities of a people toward one, or another boundary of their territory. This may be the abundance of land and unexploited resources lying on a colonial frontier and attracting the unemployed energies of the people, such as existed till recently in the United States,* and such as is now transferring the most active scenes of Russian history to far-away Siberia. But a

* Frederick J. Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, in the Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1893, pp. 199-227. Washington, 1894.

stronger attraction is that of a higher civilization and dominant economic interests. So long as the known world was confined to the temperate regions of Europe, Asia and Africa, together with the tropical districts of the Indian Ocean, the necessities of trade between Orient and Occident and the historical prestige of the lands bordering on the Mediterranean placed in this basin the centre of gravity of the cultural, commercial and political life of Europe. The continent was dominated by its Asiatic corner, its every country took on an historical significance proportionate to its proximity and accessibility to this centre. The Papacy was a Mediterranean power. The Crusades were Mediterranean wars. Athens, Rome, Constantinople, Venice, and Genoa held in turn the focal positions in this Asiatic-European sea; they were on the sunny side of the continent, while Portugal and England lay in shadow. Only that portion of Britain facing France felt the cultural influences of the southern lands. The estuaries of the Mersey and Clyde were marshy solitudes, echoing to the cry of the bittern and the ripple of Celtic fishing-boat.

After the year 1492 inaugurated the Atlantic period of history, the western front of Europe superseded the Mediterranean side in the historical leadership of the continent. The Breton coast of France waked up, the southern seaboard dozed. The old centres in the Ægean and Adriatic became drowsy corners. The busy traffic of the Mediterranean was transferred to the open ocean, where, from Trafalgar to Norway, the western states of Europe held the choice location on the world's new highway. Liverpool, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Cherbourg and Cadiz were shifted from shadowy margin to illuminated centre. Every country of Europe felt the effect. The experience of Germany was typical of the change. From the 10th to the middle of the 16th century, this heir of the old Roman Empire was drawn towards Italy by every tie of culture, commerce and political ideal. This concentration of interest on its southern neighbour made it ignore a fact so important as the maritime development of its Hanse Towns, wherein lay the real promise of its future. The shifting of its historical centre of gravity to the Atlantic seaboard, where it now lies, came very late, retarded further by lack of national unity.

Location, therefore, while being the most important single geographic factor in history, is at the same time the one most subject to the vicissitudes attending the anthropo-geographical evolution of the earth. Its value changes with the transfer of the seats of the highest civilizations from tropical to temperate lands; from the

margin of small, enclosed seas to the hem of the world ocean; from small, naturally defined territories to large, elastic areas; from mere periphery to a combination of periphery and centre, commanding the freedom of the sea and the abundant resources of a large hinterland.

LAVA FLOWING INTO THE OCEAN.

After the volcanic outbreak of 1905-06 in Savaii Island of the Samoan group the Linnean Society of New South Wales gave to Mr. H. I. Jensen, Linnean Macleay Fellow of the Society in Geology, leave of absence to carry out investigations of these latest phenomena on the island. His report is published in the *Proceedings* of the Society for 1906 (No. 124, issued March 28, 1907). Some facts from Mr. Jensen's report are presented here, together with two of his photographs showing the building of a lava peninsula in the ocean (1) in the early stage of the work and (2) a few weeks later.

The flow of 1905-06 occurred in the northeastern part of the island and came from a new crater which formed a couple of miles to the north of Mt. Pule (crater lake) on the mountain slopes. The new crater is seven or eight miles from the sea in the shortest direction, but the lava, following a circuitous course, runs an even greater distance before reaching the sea. The new volcano attained an altitude of 2,000 feet. South and east of its crater are remnants of older craters, and north of it are a couple of small cones, about a thousand feet high, which have perfect craters and are composed of lava cinders.

The quantity of lava which emerged from the new volcano covered an area of about thirty square miles and flowed from the vent in a northeasterly direction. The thickness of this lava varies greatly, depending on the proximity to the volcano and the previous configuration of the country. Originally a deep valley reached almost to the present site of the active cone. The earlier flows followed this valley, and in it, for a distance of several miles, there is now a thickness of lava exceeding a thousand feet.

What was a deep valley only a few hundred feet above sea level now forms a huge bulging lava ridge above 1,500 feet high near the volcano and sloping gently towards the sea. This inclined lava plain was still rising when Mr. Jensen saw it, through the intercalation